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4 Veterans Against War Jailed For Refusing to Aid an Inquiry

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla., July 13—A Federal district judge tonight jailed four members of the Vietnam Veterans against the War for refusing to assist in a Justice Department investigation of the organization.

In a tense courtroom scene, the four were ordered held in custody for up to 18 months by Judge David Middlebrooks.

Other members of the antiwar group muttered angrily as the judge acted and afterward shouted at a squad of city riot police stationed in the courtroom. However, there were no incidents.

The Justice Department has refused to say why it is investigating the group. Several of the veterans called it a "political investigation" designed to stop protests against the war policy of President Nixon.

Washington Queried

In Washington, a spokesman for the Justice Department would confirm only that a grand jury was "conducting an investigation," but would not divulge what was being investigated. He said he did not know how many people had been subpoenaed, or how many had been released from subpoena without testifying.

The four men who were jailed tonight here were among 23 members of the organization sibpoenaed last Friday from six states as most of them were preparing to go to Miami Beaih to take part in demonstrations at the National Democratic Convention.

"At first we thought the Government was just harassing us to keep us out of Miami," said one of those subpoenaed. "Now, it appears that the Government is out to destroy us."

Jack Levine of Philadelphia, one of the group's lawyers said, "This is an absolute outrage."

Tonight, several members of Vietnam Veterans against the war, were calling associates in other states to urge them to come to here to demonstrate in support of the men in jail.

Those being held were Jack L. Jennings and William Bruce Horton of Gainesville, Fla., John Victor Chambers of St. Petersburg, Fla., and Wayne Beverly of Auston, Tex.

All are in their 20's. They were wearing Army or Marine fatigue uniforms.

They went peacefully with a deputy United States marshal after the judge ordered them jailed. The 20 or so other members of the group who waited o the second floor of the Federal Court House at Tallahassee through the day had planned to demonstrate if the judge carried through with a request from a Justice Department official, Guy Goodwin, tha the men be jailed.

Refuses to Comment

Mr. Goodwin, who has headed several internal security investigations for the Justice Department, has refused to comment on the nature of the current investigation and tonight left the courtroom through a back door apparently to avoid reporters.

Mr. Levine and James Reif, a lawyer from New York City, said that the Government's actions today proved a contention by the antiwar group that the Justice Department was trying to "stifle political comment."

The Government this afternoon released 16 of the 23 members who had been subpoenaed. Only three or four of them had even been called before the grand jury although the Government required them to remain here for almost a week.

"They just wanted to keep us here until the Democratic Convention was over," one of them said.

But the investigation took a more serious tone tonight after Judge Middlebrooks granted a request from Attorney General Richard Kleindienst that four of those subpoenaed be granted immunity so that they could be required to testify.

The judge granted the immunity and then ordered the four to testify. They refused and the judge ordered them jailed.

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Antiwar Vets Indicted On GOP Riot Charges

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — A federal grand jury indicted six antiwar veterans today on charges of conspiring to disrupt next month's Republican National Convention in Miami Beach with guns, bombs and other forms of violence.

The grand jury completed a week long probe by accusing the six members of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) of plotting to "maliciously damage and destroy by means of explosive devices buildings and persons" at the Aug. 21-24 convention.

Indicted were Don Purdue, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Peter Mahoney, New York City; John Kniffer, Texas; William Patterson, Texas; Alton Foss, Miami and Scott Camil, Gainesville, Fla.

Camil, Florida VVAW coordinator, also was indicted on additional charges of instructing in the use and application of incendiary devices and possession of a chemical bomb.

In a rare closed-door bond hearing, bonds of $25,000 were set for three of those indicted —Camil, Kniffen and Mahoney—by U.S. Magistrate Robert C. Dean.

U.S. marshals blocked newsmen from entering the hearing room.

An attorney for the group protested that the order to let only lawyers into the hearing deprived the defendants of their right to a public hearing."

A group of war veterans milled around the front steps of the postoffice and a protest was scheduled for later today.

The other defendants were not immediately available for comment.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Jack Carrouth said those under indictment, who are all among the original 23 antiwar vets called here this week, will be brought before a committing magistrate sometime today for the purpose of setting bonds. He said the conspiracy charges each carry maximum penalties of five years imprisonment.

Meanwhile, the grand jury recessed until Aug. 8.

A Legal Defense Fund spokesman, Judy Peterson of Gainesville, said earlier that the alleged conspiracy charges also involved plans for the just-concluded Democratic convention, but the indictments only mentioned events allegedly planned for "Aug. 21-28 in Miami Beach."

FOUR OTHER antiwar vets were arrested Thursday night on charges of direct contempt of court levelled by U.S. Dist. Judge David L. Middlebrooks.

The indictments accuse the six of plotting to organize numerous "fire teams" armed with automatic weapons, firearms and incendiary devices.

The teams allegedly would then "attack police stations, police cars and stores in Miami Beach on various dates," said the indictments.

The indictments also accused the six of planning to "fire lead weights, fried marbles, ball bearings, cherry bombs and smoke bombs" in the city and to use "wrist rockets, sling shots and cross bows."

The indictments made use of the same anticonspiracy law which resulted in indictments following the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago and the celebrated "Chicago Seven" case.

Thursday night the Democratic National Convention condemned the Nixon Administration for attempting to "intimidate and discredit" the antiwar group.